



# A NEW LEAF

a literary publication of Marijuana Anonymous

**Vol. 36, No. 12 - December 2024**

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## Letter from A New Leaf Publications

### ***Welcome to the December 2024 Issue of A New Leaf!***

This month's issue is in the spirit of Step 12. You will find two stories highlighting service and how beneficial it is in recovery. The ANLP website has had some new improvements to the [About page](#). We also created a new page with the job description of A New Leaf Publications Liaisons (formerly known as Bureau Chiefs) to explain the role further and encourage members to be of service. See [anewleafpublications.org/liaison](http://anewleafpublications.org/liaison)

Don't forget to register for our upcoming Session II of the 2024 Conference on January 11, 2025. As we explained last month, while preparing the daily reader, *Living Every Day with Hope*, for publication, three sets of identical entries and two sets of very similar entries were noticed—which ANLP, the MA Board of Trustees, and the Daily Reader subcommittee all agreed need to be modified before publishing the daily reader in book form. Anyone is welcome to register to attend this session as a Participating Observer. Please review the [Agenda packet](#) and be sure to **\*register\*** to attend by January 5th, 2025.

Our goal is to make the *Living Every Day with Hope* available to purchase in its exciting new book form within days of this special session of the Conference on Amazon (and later available on the ANLP website). The daily reader will continue to be available for free on the MA website, and will be sold in both print and ebook.

Yours in Service,  
ANLP Department

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## My New Life in Service

***Written by Maryanne M.***

I entered the rooms of MA during the height of the pandemic. Never in my wildest dreams did I believe I would ever be fully sober after decades of heavy use. I had not planned on

sobriety, in fact, my plan was to do the exact opposite. When I chose sobriety, I had no idea how my life was about to change.

I was attending meetings in another fellowship that focused on the effects of my growing up in a dysfunctional family, and doing service there. In the MA rooms, I first heard the phrase “sobriety requirement” coupled with “service.” At an MA meeting I was regularly attending, there was an open service position with a 90-day sobriety requirement. I believe it was to read the meeting script. I raised my hand and expressed my interest in the role. A long-timer suggested I get trained ahead of time so that I would be ready to take on the role at 90 days. I think I was about 65-70 days in. I emphatically refused because I wanted to wait until I reached 90 days of sobriety to train for the role. That sobriety goal and my desire to do service helped me get through those difficult first months. I have been in service ever since then, and my sobriety counter reminds me I’ve been at this for three and a half years.

At the Meeting level, I frequently share, keep my video on, and put my phone number into the chat. I have been the speaker, kept time, worked on scripts, chaired and co-chaired (tech hosted), and found speakers – all forms of service. At the District level, I served as a Group Service Representative (GSR) for six months. One of my favorite times in service very early on was working on a meeting script with another MA member; me being on the East Coast, and she on the West Coast. We were not using Google docs then, so we worked on it for several hours one weekend day. That may not sound like fun to some, but editing is a passion of mine, so I enjoyed our collaboration. We are dear friends now.

Some months into my sobriety, another long-timer noticed me eagerly focusing on the use of punctuation. It was probably about a semicolon: my favorite! She suggested I attend an MA World Services Policies and Procedures committee. I followed her advice and joined a P&P meeting soon after that. I remember they were discussing an issue that I was not familiar with, so I just listened. Some folks that I really respect were in that meeting, and I felt privileged to be there with them.

Over time, I became more and more comfortable entering various World Services committee meetings. I do not have to attend every occurrence of a meeting, and my presence is appreciated when I do show up. Something I learned very quickly is that doing service at the World Services-level can be started at any time during the recovery process. New voices add another layer of knowledge and interpretation to the process.

After about four months of sobriety, I attended my first MA Convention in October 2021 – ‘Virtual Serenity’, hosted by District 8 (I love NYC!). I was online with them the entire weekend and cried when it was over. Even after it ended, I stayed in fellowship to chat with folks. I was amazed by all the recovery, service and talent I had witnessed. I immediately joined the 2022 Convention planning committee for ‘Serenity by the Sea’ hosted by District 20 in San Diego. Next, I joined the 2023 planning committee for ‘Pillars of the Program’ hosted by District 4 in Seattle, and then served on the committee for this year’s Convention ‘Gratitude by the Golden Gate’ hosted by District 2 in San Francisco.

At the Seattle Convention, I was approached by two fellow MA members about serving as Secretary of A New Leaf Publications (MA’s publishing department). Tragically, right after that, I lost someone very dear to me in MA. He had been doing a ton of service when he passed on. I made the decision, in his honor, to join the ANLP team, and I am honored to carry on his legacy of service.

I have attended every MA World Service Business Conference since I joined MA – all as a “Participating Observer.” At the 2024 Conference, I removed my name from the Third Legacy list (members in attendance with 2+ years of full sobriety and willing to serve on the Board of Trustees). I thought my ongoing role as ANLP Secretary would disqualify me for a position on the Board. I learned that this was not true, and I had to decide whether or not to put my name back onto the list. I recalled another trusted member who often shares his regret about taking his name off the Third Legacy list. A loved one told me I only had to decide if I wanted to be a Trustee, suggesting I trust my instincts. I already knew I wanted to do it so I put my name back onto the list. I was elected to be on the Board and was chosen to serve as Correspondence Secretary Trustee. And that brings me to the present day.

A fellow MA member stepped up to serve as ANLP Secretary a few months after the Conference, so I let go of that commitment. I learned so much in the role and gained more self-confidence. I believe that this was my intended path to my new role as a Trustee. I continue to hold the words of encouragement from the friend I lost close to my heart as I serve.

I have forged friendships in MA deeper than any I have ever experienced. My strongest relationships are with the people I serve with. I feel at home when I am being of service in committees, sharing in my regular meetings, emailing or talking with a newcomer or a loved one of someone struggling, and working with my sponsee and my sponsor - carrying the message of recovery. In grateful service, I am so thankful for my new life, a life with hope.

## ***A New Leaf's Purpose***

*A New Leaf* celebrates MA member creativity and seeks to publish the message of hope in recovery. With your many wonderful and creative submissions, ***A New Leaf continues to unify us in our shared experience as marijuana addicts.***

*The articles contained in A New Leaf are the sole opinions of the authors and do not reflect the opinions of Marijuana Anonymous as a whole. MA is not affiliated with— and does not endorse or accept contributions from—any outside enterprise.*

### **ANLP Department**

Chairperson: Heather C.

Treasurer: Layne J.F.

Secretary: Brian L.

Content Editor: Tiffany A.

Design Editor: Zach A.

Creative Designer: Jules M.\*

Publishing Consultant: Steven B.\*

*\*Special Workers*



## **The Twelve Steps of MA**

***Written by Tiffany A.***  
**Sung to the tune of “The Twelve Days of Christmas”**

For the 1st Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
the powerless version of me.

For the 2nd Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
two brand new slogans, and the powerless version of me.

For the 3rd Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
three sample prayers, two brand new slogans, and the powerless version of me.

For the 4th Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
four 4th Step spreadsheets, three sample prayers, two brand new slogans, and the powerless version of me.

For the 5th Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
five new defects, four 4th Step spreadsheets, three sample prayers, two brand new slogans, and the powerless version of me.

For the 6th Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
six ways to get ready, five new defects, four 4th Step spreadsheets, three sample prayers, two brand new slogans, and the powerless version of me.

For the 7th Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
seven rocks I won't drop, six ways to get ready, five new defects, four 4th Step spreadsheets, three sample prayers, two brand new slogans, and the powerless version of me.

For the 8th Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
eight amends I despise, seven rocks I won't drop, six ways to get ready, five new defects, four 4th Step spreadsheets, three sample prayers, two brand new slogans, and the powerless version of me.

For the 9th Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
nine frightening convos, eight amends I despise, seven rocks I won't drop, six ways to get ready, five new defects, four 4th Step spreadsheets, three sample prayers, two brand new slogans, and the powerless version of me.

For the 10th Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
ten more inventories, nine frightening convos, eight amends I despise, seven rocks I won't drop, six ways to get ready, five new defects, four 4th Step spreadsheets, three sample prayers, two brand new slogans, and the powerless version of me.

For the 11th Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...  
eleven prayers repeating, ten more inventories, nine frightening convos, eight amends I despise, seven rocks I won't drop, six ways to get ready, five new defects, four 4th Step spreadsheets, three sample prayers, two brand new slogans, and the powerless version of me.

For the 12th Step of MA my sponsor sent to me...


twelve service options, eleven prayers repeating, ten more inventories, nine frightening convos, eight amends I despise, seven rocks I won't drop, six ways to get ready, five new defects, four 4th Step spreadsheets, three sample prayers, two brand new slogans, and the POWERLESS VERSION OF ME!!

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## Monthly Writing Workshops

For more information about these workshops visit: [anewleafpublications.org/workshop/](http://anewleafpublications.org/workshop/)

*Please note - the start time for the workshop has moved back one hour*



Let us cherish, preserve,  
and carry the message  
and the gift of  
experience, strength, and hope  
to those marijuana addicts  
who are still suffering

**A NEW LEAF PUBLICATIONS  
CREATIVE WRITING WORKSHOPS**

**1ST SATURDAY  
EACH MONTH**

**10 - 11:15 AM PACIFIC  
1 - 2:15 PM EASTERN  
5 - 6:15 PM UTC**

**TO JOIN US, EMAIL: [WRITE@ANLP12.ORG](mailto:WRITE@ANLP12.ORG)**

## SHARE

Your contributions to MA literature, and sharing of experience, strength, and hope through submissions to A New Leaf and all other MA publications, serve as an inspiration.

*A New Leaf* celebrates creativity and invites members to share recovery-focused stories, poems, song lyrics, prayers, meditations, break up letters to "Mary Jane," inspirational quotes heard in a meeting, artwork, comics, illustrations, photos, and crosswords or puzzles. We seek to publish the message of hope in your journey.

Submit Your  
Content

Writing  
Prompts

For a list of suggested prompts visit: [MA12.org/Prompts](http://MA12.org/Prompts)

Want to share *A New Leaf* with others?



## HEARD IN AN MA MEETING

*You can move  
in Fear  
or  
You can move  
in Faith*

# INSPIRE

***Sharing program slogans,  
quotes, and words of wisdom  
heard in a meeting!***

We honor "what you see here, let it stay here,"  
and anything included in this section of A New  
Leaf will always be shared anonymously.

Share your Favorite Sayings

# POETRY

## Pot Hole to Purpose

*Written by Jovan B.*

Step One, we admit: we've lost all control,  
Marijuana trapped us, devouring us whole.  
Step Two, we believe there's a Power unseen,  
Greater than smoke, to restore what's clean.

Step Three, we surrender, let go of the fight,  
We hand over our will and step into light.  
Step Four, we examine the harm we have done,  
Owning the battles we thought we had won.

Step Five, we confess, to be honest and clear,  
Releasing the shame we've held close and near.  
Step Six, we prepare to drop habits long kept,  
Ready for change, no regrets or missteps.

Step Seven, we ask, with humility's grace,  
"Remove these defects, help us find our place."  
Step Eight, we list those we've harmed on our way,  
Owning the cost others had to pay.

Step Nine, we make right where making right's due,  
Apologies spoken, and actions made new.  
Step Ten, we reflect each day as it goes,

Correcting our faults as awareness grows.

Step Eleven, we pray, and in silence we seek,  
The wisdom to stand, the strength when we're weak.  
Step Twelve, we help others rise from despair,  
Sharing our story to show that we care.

No more joints or clouds—our minds now are clear,  
No green haze to dull the joy that's near.  
Each step takes us further from addiction's snare,  
To freedom and purpose, beyond the repair.

“Pot Hole to Purpose”—a journey begun,  
From life in the fog to life in the sun.  
No cravings remain, no reason to stray—  
We've found a new path, lighting the way.

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## Transformation

*Written by Daniele S.*

My heart is beating forcefully  
My armpits are damp  
My hands are twisting in my lap  
My lips are trembling  
My nose is clogged  
Tears keep seeping from my eyes

What am I doing here in this place,  
Sitting around an oval table with strangers  
Listening to them talk?  
I'm mute. I'm frozen. I'm processing an influx of emotion  
Fear. Discomfort. Trepidation. Sadness. Guilt. Regret.

I am finally facing the TRUTH  
Head on, eyes open  
It's clear  
Or, rather, it becomes clear as I hear their stories  
Similar in substance if not in detail  
To mine

Years, decades of denial, of obfuscation  
All those buried feelings... emerging  
What is happening to me?  
Only the Lord knows...

# Step, Tradition, Question, and Concept for the Month

## Step Twelve

Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these steps, we tried to carry this message to marijuana addicts and to practice these principles in all our affairs.

In working the Eleventh Step, we were practicing the principle of Service.

## Tradition Twelve

Anonymity is the spiritual foundation of all our traditions, ever reminding us to place principles before personalities.

## Question Twelve

Have friends or relatives ever complained that your using is damaging your relationship with them?

## Concept Twelve

The Marijuana Anonymous Service Structure should be one of selfless service and not of power or government, ensuring that the spiritual principles of the 12 Steps, 12 Traditions, and the warranties of Article 12 of the Conference Charter are always maintained.

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## Dear Marijuana

*Written by Kristen J.*

Dear Marijuana,

I know I'm a little late here. And as I continue these ongoing efforts of prying myself from your shackles, I know that I can say "goodbye" to the belief that you are the only one who can embrace and comfort me. I can do that for myself now; it's taken years to realize that I am better off without you.

You fed me temporary highs built upon lies: "I'll make you so much happier; I'll make that meal taste better; I'll help you sleep tonight; I'll make this movie way funnier and that book more interesting; and I'll make time in nature even sweeter and the stars so much brighter; and that class you hate more tolerable, and the pain less prevalent. And for sure, I'll make you more interesting, and conversation easier, and the sex will be way better with me there. And connecting with your son, reading a bedtime story, will be so much more FUN with me around."

So subtly and slowly, you put yourself between me and everything and everyone; you deceived me to believe that your presence was enhancing my life, when truly it was dulling and muffling it all.

"If you don't keep me around," you had said, "life will be so unbearably boring and prude." You told me I needed you, or I wasn't a real adult, because real adults make time for their own selfish pleasures. And I believed you when you dared to shout that my beautiful life is a prison without you. It was you who held me hostage! Truthfully, I never needed you for anything; you were just convenient, you were just there when I was seeking. You kept me warm on lonely nights, but always left me wanting more because you could never be what I sought. You're transient, not transcendental.



It was all bullshit and I'm screaming at you to stop whispering to me that you can make things better. I hear you, but I know it's false. You didn't give me any of the things you said you were going to give me. You never kept your promises; I've never felt any more satisfied in life once your encapsulating numbness wore off. I gave you my time, attention, money, and praise. You robbed me blindly of authentic experiences, fullness, the completeness of living by leading me to believe that there was something wrong with me and you, and only YOU could fix it. You f\*cked me up. I ruined relationships over you. I wrecked multiple vehicles being distracted by you. You could have killed me, and I was prepared to defend your honor. You sneaky f\*cker. You see, you robbed me. You stole a part of me. You hypnotized me into a trance of thinking that you were the only way to contentment.

I will no longer run to you when I feel SOMETHing, anything. I will no longer make excuses to be with you all day and night. I will no longer choose you over OPENING UP, and sharing my truth, and forming relationships with people. I am strong enough to be alone without you. I will no longer fall for your lies, and I am keen on your traps. From now on, I will make steady strides to use my energy to serve the greatest good, rather than surrendering all of my strength over to you in despair. I will not use you as a means for socialization, as you "helped" me so many times to form fake-ass friendships upon the facade that you were the true path to connection.

Now I am connected, and you are nowhere around.

I am turning UP the dial on my life, no longer turning it down, and guess what? You have lost the privilege to f\*ck with my gauges of perception. And I hear you now, telling me I'm crazy without you but this fire, this fuel is MINE. My sober existence does not have to be comfortable for other people: I will not numb myself or dull myself down to make the world more tolerable, or myself LESS anything. I'm done escaping.

Our time together is done.

Most Authentically,  
Kristen J.

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## How the Promises Have Come True to Me Through Service

*Written by Anonymous*

My time in active addiction was plagued by feelings of uselessness. I felt that I was not a "productive" member of society because I had to stop working due to chronic health issues, and receive disability benefits to survive. Initially, I abused substances more and more to try and push those feelings away, and the more I used, the more useless and unproductive I felt. Because of my addictions, I failed to see that my inability to work or be "productive" in the traditional sense didn't matter to anyone else. I didn't see the many ways I could be "productive," such as by being a loving, caring, present, and supportive sister, daughter, or friend to the loved ones who cared about me. Instead, I isolated, and neglected my

relationships with people I cared about. I missed opportunities to be there for my friends and family, and when I was physically there I wasn't emotionally available or present because I was high.

Today, the "profound and sublime" promise from Step Nine that those "feeling[s] of uselessness and self-pity will disappear. ..." has become more true than any other promise in my life, and not just because I'm clean and sober today. While that is one reason I feel more self-confident and useful, the biggest reason I feel "useful" again is because MA has given me so many opportunities to find my purpose in being of service to others. As Life with Hope promises, once we've completed Step Nine, we will find that "[s]ervice to others has replaced selfishness" and today, it is being of service that has given me the sense of purpose and belonging that I lacked in my life while in active addiction. Because recovery has "empowered [me] to be of service to others, I find that I can "do things that [I] never could have done alone." This has restored my faith and trust in others, and in myself. Through working together with my fellows towards the common goal of helping to "carry the message," my attitude has been transformed into one of "gratitude, humility, and a sincere effort to be of service." Life With Hope, 3rd Ed., Step Nine, pg. 48.

My service in MA started simple, first by being a greeter for a meeting, bringing snacks for an in-person meeting, and maintaining a meeting's phone list. But that small seed of service gave me a new sense of responsibility and kept me coming to meetings even when I did not want to show up for myself, and I eventually became co-secretary for my home group meeting. Two months into that service role, COVID-19 shut down all in person meetings. Concerned for the fate of my home group, I quickly collaborated with others in my district to open a shared Zoom account and create a virtual meeting. The word spread. We eventually held regular tech host training sessions and maintained a list of speakers for the district. This naturally evolved into serving on the District Service Committee (DSC), and with my honed technical skills, I soon found myself volunteering as a tech host for the first virtual MA World Service Conference.

I learned the business of MA, and soon drafted a Conference Agenda Item. This experience taught me how much of an impact I could make, so I continued to be of service on multiple committees, using the legal and writing skills that were unused when my health and active addiction left me unable to work. Being of service all these ways led me to the openness and willingness to step into a Trustee role. Now I can share my legal knowledge while learning new skills.

I have grown more from service and sponsorship than I have from anything else in my recovery. Helping to "carry the message" of recovery through sponsoring others, attending meetings, sharing my experience, strength and hope, and my aforementioned service, has given me a greater sense of purpose and belonging than anything else in my life today.

When I say I am a "grateful addict," it is because if I were not an addict, I would not have had these many opportunities to give back to others, and feel my self-esteem return the way that it did. I never imagined my life would look like it does today, but the ways I've been afforded to give back have formed the basis of some of the best experiences, relationships and memories of my life today!

The interpersonal, technical and practical life skills I've learned and practiced are all thanks to service. Even my own industry knowledge has expanded through it! Joining committees

has given me a chance to learn about myself, my boundaries, my defects and shortcomings, and my strengths.

While I could linger on the things I feel my life lacks, or the ways I believe The Promises have not come true for me in the same way they have for others, I instead try to focus on humility and giving back, and in doing so, I get out of my own head, and find my purpose through practicing love and tolerance. It is those moments of connection with other addicts that I feel the most “happy, joyous, and free” and that is something I know I won’t get from riches or houses or fame or success in the traditional meaning.

Today, I encourage folks to find a new way to help others and be of service. You do not need a lot of time clean and sober, or to have finished working all 12 Steps to be of service and give back what was so freely given to you by your fellows. If you have one week of sobriety, welcome the person who has one day, and you’ll find that you can help one another. Volunteer to read or keep time in a meeting. Say hi to a fellow, and maybe give them your phone number. Call someone, offer to be a sponsor or accountability buddy to another member, or join a committee. You never know how you’re helping others by your presence in this world. The world needs your own unique light and way of serving others. If you’re anything like me, you’ll find that through these small acts of humility and service, The Promises are coming true in your life, even if you didn’t believe they really ever would. We keep our recovery by sharing it with others, and the more you “give it away,” the more you’ll find you have!

## **Celebrating 217 Years of Sobriety!**

### District 2 - San Francisco and East Bay, CA

Barbara T. 11/21/2000 24 years

### District 5 - Orange County, CA

Carly D. 11/09/2020 4 years

Jessica G. 11/21/2021 3 years

Joe W. 11/19/2011 13 years

Kathy D. 11/04/2003 21 years

Larry C. 11/02/1999 25 years

Moxie 11/21/2023 1 year!

Nathan 11/01/2020 4 years

Ron "The Gardner" 11/05/1995 29 years

Shelby 11/15/2015 9 years

Tina 11/06/2007 17 years

### District 7 - S. Los Angeles County, CA

Manny D.T. 12/06/1999 25 years

### District 8 - New York Metro

Emily B. 11/13/2023 1 year!

Sam L. 11/03/2023 1 year!

Tom M. 12/01/2023 1 year!

### District 11 - Oregon and SW Washington

Andy D. 12/02/2007 17 years

Sarah S. 11/27/2022 2 years

Thomas B. 11/25/2018 6 years

Zachary E. 11/25/2022 2 years

### District 20 - San Diego, CA

Elizabeth M. 12/03/2022 2 years

### District 21 - Colorado

Marcy G. 12/04/2016 8 years

### District 27 - Independent Meetings

Kristin H. 9/25/2023 1 year!

### Also

Stephanie V. 11/22/2023 1 year!

Alexandria, VA

# Share your Sobriety Anniversary in *A New Leaf*!

We want to celebrate your year(s) of recovery! **If your sobriety birthday has occurred within the last two months, please submit it by the 1st of the month** you would like it published, with your Name, District or Location, Sobriety Date, Number of Years, and District or City to [anewleafpublications.org/birthday](http://anewleafpublications.org/birthday).

## Self-Supporting through our own Contributions...

Click to make a  
contribution

The primary purpose of MA is to carry the message of recovery to the marijuana addict who still suffers. Therefore, this literary publication is free and available to distribute widely. When contributing, please consider the value MA adds to your life.

## Marijuana Anonymous Resources

### Meeting Finder

Marijuana Anonymous has 300+ weekly meetings that can be attended for free all over the world virtually and by phone, with in-person meetings available in some areas as well.

**Need support? Contact us.**

[Join a Meeting →](#)

### Speaker Tapes Podcast

Experience, strength, and hope on the go! Anywhere... Anytime... Available wherever you listen to podcasts...

*Any opinions expressed within these recordings are only those of the individuals sharing.*

[Listen →](#)

### MA's App

The Marijuana Anonymous App features our basic text *Life with Hope (2nd Ed.)*, *12-Step Workbook*, pamphlets, and sobriety counter.

*Please note the in-app meeting finder is unreliable, refer to our website.*

[Download the App →](#)

Contact Us

# A NEW LEAF PUBLICATIONS

Publishing Department – Marijuana Anonymous World Services

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